

**Statement by Aimee Grmoljez**  
**Before the Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee**  
**On Behalf of Verizon Wireless**  
**11/17/11**

On behalf of my client Verizon Wireless, I am pleased to have the opportunity to state for the record Verizon's strong commitment on behalf of its customers in Montana, and want to convey that the company is committed to continued expansion of its network in our State, including a commitment to rural areas.

Verizon Wireless is the largest wireless provider in the United States, and the largest provider in the State of Montana, where the company has over 500,000 customers, and invested over \$25 million in the network in the State in 2010, and over \$250 million since 2001. Verizon Wireless realizes that it does not have optimal coverage in all parts of Montana yet, including some rural parts of the State, but wants the Committee to know that the company is aware of these areas and will continue to make investments to close the gap for areas that need more coverage, and will dedicate additional resources over the next several years to ensure the expanded build-out of cell sites.

Verizon Wireless is also proud that it is continuing to roll out its next Generation broadband capability called 4G LTE. LTE stands for Long-Term Evolution (LTE), and is the fastest and most capable broadband capability available. 4G means data speeds that are least ten times faster than the 3G platform, with data speeds up to 12 megabits per second versus 1.2 megabits with 3G. In less than a year, Verizon Wireless has introduced its 4G network to 179 markets across the United States, covering more than 186 million Americans.

Although all of Verizon's current cell sites in Montana are 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation, beginning in 2012, the carrier will begin rolling out 4G in some cities in Montana, which will mean advanced broadband with the ability to download songs in seconds and movies in minutes. Verizon Wireless is committing the resources necessary to upgrade cell sites in the State to lay the foundation for 4G. The long-term goal will be to transition the entire network, including all sites in Montana, to 4G at no additional cost to customers but with considerable benefits to them. As this roll-out occurs in the State, over the long-term rural areas of Montana will get the benefit of the most advanced network with the fastest broadband speeds because 4G will be available for all customers.

Verizon has also established a "Rural Partnerships Program" for LTE, which is aimed at extending mobile broadband service to rural communities, so there may be opportunities through this program for other providers to partner with Verizon Wireless to serve the broadband needs of rural customers in Montana. Extending the LTE mobile broadband service to rural communities through potential rural partnerships would bring the benefits of 4G services to rural markets quickly and efficiently, and bring together compatible infrastructure resources.

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Therefore, both through potential rural partnerships and with the expected expansion of Verizon Wireless broadband capabilities in the State through upcoming 4G deployment, Verizon Wireless is prepared to accelerate network capabilities in Montana to serve both rural and urban communities with high quality broadband capabilities.

Thank you.